



Eastern PA Coalition for Abandoned Mine Reclamation

Robert E. Hughes, *Executive Director*

101 South Main Street

Ashley, PA 18706

Phone: (570) 371-3523

E-mail: rhughes@epcamr.org

Website: www.epcamr.org

October 2017 Progress Report

Education & Outreach

- Attended a screening of the newly released documentary, ***Centralia: PA's Lost Town*** at the Dietrich Theatre, Tunkhannock, PA with the Director, *Joe Sapienza II*, *Mike Hewitt-EPCAMR*, and *David Dekok*; Nearly **60** people were in attendance; Participated in a panel presentation following the screening
- Welcomed *Tracey DePasquale*-Lutheran Advocacy Ministry in PA Director to the Choose Clean Water Coalition (CCWC)
- Conducted a phone interview with *Irina Zhorof*, a reporter for a science show called the PULSE, out of WHYY, Philadelphia, PA on abandoned mine lands, the RECLAIM Act, and EPCAMR's work in the region;
- EPCAMR Staff began to prepare the 45 gallon fish tank for a second year of ***Trout in the Classroom (TIC)*** in partnership with the PA Council of Trout Unlimited, PA Fish & Boat Commission, and the Stanley Cooper Chapter of Trout Unlimited, our local Conservation Organization Partner; Completed the year end survey report for 2016-2017; Completed the 2017-2018 Registration information; Received our instructions for the upcoming delivery of the trout eggs from *Tali MacArthur* and *Amidae Daniel*; *Mike* will be picking up the eggs on October 31st from the Benner Springs Hatchery
- *David Brocca*, Director of the soon to be released ***Knox Mine Disaster documentary*** sent along two very old and interesting movie clips from the early 1900s on mining and abandoned mines; https://archive.org/details/0617_Waters_of_the_Commonwealth_M01995_19_01_01_00 and https://archive.org/details/0617_Waters_of_the_Commonwealth_M01995_19_11_37_00
- Directed *Denise Hernandez*, Urban Outreach Specialist to follow up with Nick Odato from the PA DCED on EPCAMR's ***EITC Renewal Application*** that has been held up for nearly 2 years to find out how we can be approved for our inclusion on the 2018 List of Approved EICT eligible environmental educational improvement organizations
- Promoted a 1-day Short Course on ***Online Environmental Data: Accessing, Processing, and Publishing*** at LCCC to be taught by *Dr. Thomas E. Barnard*, PhD, PE on our social media outlets

- *Branden Diehl*, Foundation for PA Watersheds sent EPCAMR a contact for SEDA COG, *Betsy Lockwood* who was supportive of the RECLAIM Act and was willing to forward information to regional economic development partners that work in her area; EPCAMR Executive Director to make a follow up call to her
- Reviewed the SESYNC Chapter, *Restoring Orange Waters to Blue: Creating a Culture of Civic Engagement through Learning Experiences*, authored by the EPCAMR Executive Director and *Dr. Louise Chawla*, with edits by Cornell University Press and responded to comments from *Dr. Marianne Krasny*
- Informed *Ezra Thrush*, Campaign Manager=Watershed Advocacy for PennFuture that EPCAMR would be interested in attending a meeting with *Congressman Cartwright's* Office in November or the first half of December 2017 as a part of their 'Advocates for the Chesapeake Bay Watershed' program to discuss key watershed issues, including AMD, reclamation, economic redevelopment, and prioritization of watersheds in the region
- *Gavi Reiter*-with the ***Just Transition PA Working Group***, requested EPCAMR's involvement and input on what it would take to build a PA just transition away from the fossil fuel economy towards a renewable energy one, rooted in justice, accountability, community ownership, and climate responsibility; The Group is looking to create jobs in a sector where fossil fuel works can transition towards and provide for their families, looks at solutions and ideas that center around people of color and other impacted communities so that we can have an economy and energy system that thrives, and for a transition towards 100% renewable energy as justly and quickly as possible to maintain a healthy human civilization; A video conference is going to be held in the Winter 2017 to discuss ideas; The first phase of the work will be survey based; The survey is being developed by a University of Penn Professor; EPCAMR Executive Director was asked to provide feedback on a Google document or a few phone calls to discuss further; Reviewed the Draft of the ***Principles, Goals, and Context*** document; Provided her with a copy of EPCAMR's Climate Resiliency presentation for her review and consideration
- *William Rappaport*-Business Development Specialist for E & E News, has provided EPCAMR with a free trial access to several news outlets in Washington DC; <https://www.eenews.net/>
- The Pottsville Theatre reached out to *Joe Sapienza II*, Director of the *Centralia: PA's Lost Town* documentary, along with the neighborhood schools and they want to screen the documentary in December and engage several of the individuals interviewed for the film, including EPCAMR; EPCAMR agreed to participate
- Conducted **4** Outdoor Environmental Education Programs with the 6th grade Solomon-Plains Elementary School, Wilkes-Barre Area School District, at the Plainsville AMD Borehole property along the Susquehanna River with the EPCAMR Staff with over **100** students

Technical Assistance

- *Ted Naeckel*, AET provided EPCAMR with a copy of their Appeal Brief for an Efficient Oil Shale Recovery Efforts Patent; AET has a technology that they would like to demonstrate on waste coal gob piles should they be able to secure \$300,000 in funds
- Forwarded *Mike*-EPCAMR Program Manager with several abstracts on Centralia for his review
- Prepared a Letter of Support and offer of Technical Assistance to Ashley Borough as they pursue a **2018 US EPA Brownfields Community-wide Brownfields Assessment** Grant for **\$200,000** in hazardous sites and another **\$100,000** for petroleum sites
- Monitored an abandoned mine water pump borehole in Newport Township that was being backfilled by the PA DEP BAMR; The water level elevation was at 167' in depth with an oily sheen and smell coming from the water surface within the borehole; The surface elevation was 757.44'; The AMLIS Inventory calls this area Newport Center West
- Reviewed SRBC's beta-version of their revamped Mine Drainage Portal at the request of *Tom Clark*-AMD Coordinator; Provided comments on the usefulness and user-friendly interface of the portal
- Prepared a Letter of Support and Commitment to the Earth Conservancy for the ***Espy Run Restoration in the Nanticoke Creek Watershed-Segment C*** and provided it to *Dr. Elizabeth Hughes*
- Met with Andy Friefeld, Senior at Temple University's School of Landscape Architecture, to review and discuss his landscape design plans for the Black Dessert area in Exeter Borough, and the Harry E. Bank Reclamation area in Swoyersville, both abandoned mine lands in the Wyoming Valley
- Provided *Gabby* with two reports on Freshwater Mussel Research in the Susquehanna River basin; EPCAMR was considering a grant for a survey near AMD impacted reaches of the River to see if the mussels are present, dying, filtering the AMD, or not present at all; *Gabby* did find some mussels just below the Knox Mine Disaster site along the River in the AMD and wasn't sure if the population that was present was washed up there or died from exposure to the AMD; No work has ever been done on the North Branch of the Susquehanna by the PA F&BC or US FWS; May need to take another look at the State Wildlife Grant Fund Program;
<http://www.fishandboat.com/Resource/StateWildlifeGrantProgram/Pages/default.aspx>
- Forwarded the Huber Breaker Preservation Society's scanned batch of pavers over to *Michelle Casey*-Secretary to provide to *Wes Saltz*-Treasurer who will be taking care of the paver orders going forward with Olde Mill Impressions; Provided her with *Allen's* information; <http://www.oldemillimpressions.com/>
- *Mike Gondell*, member of the Western Pocono TU Chapter requested that EPCAMR make a visit to a small tributary that flows under the Hazleton Rails to Trails Project to see if we can test the water to find out why so many small native brook trout are present with the current mining conditions around the area where the trout seem to be in isolation from the larger unnamed tributary; Locally, the fishermen call it 'Resilient Run'; It's either in the Cranberry Creek or Upper Lehigh River drainage without investigating it further on a map with a GPS location

- Continued working with the EPCAMR Staff on the development of the Toby Creek Coldwater Heritage Conservation Plan (CHP) and discussed making a decision on what sub-watershed to focus on; *Rachael* prepared a draft letter of support template to provide to the 3 municipalities that we will be seeking support from in the Upper watershed (Dallas Township, Dallas Borough, Kingston Twp.); EPCAMR Executive Director forwarded the signed letters to each of the municipalities via e-mail
- Provided *Mike Korb* with links to publicly available information on mine pool information in the Northern Anthracite Fields, mine water quality data on SRBC's Mine Drainage Portal (<http://mdw.srbc.net/minedrainageviewer>) ; EPCAMR's Technical Report on Mine Water Resources (<http://epcamr.org/home/current-initiatives/technical-assistance/watershed-assessment/mine-pool-mapping-initiative/>); Suggested the he follow up with Tom Clark-SRBC AMD Coordinator directly for their mine pool data because EPCAMR isn't sure of their policy on the release of data that was under a professional services contract agreement; <https://pubs.usgs.gov/pp/0473b/report.pdf>; <https://www.slideshare.net/MichaelHewitt4/robert-hughes-and-michael-hewitt-epcamr-3d-modeling-of-eastern-pennsylvania-anthracite-mine-pools>; <http://catal0g.info/downloads/barrier-pillars-in-lackawanna-basin-northern-field.pdf>; Isolated mine pool boundaries in the Northern Field are not yet completed; EPCAMR put in for a technical assistance grant through Growing Greener and it was turned down partially because the watersheds in the Northern Fields lacked any priority for funding
- Received word from John Wright-NFWF Coordinator for the NE Region, that they were reviewing EPCAMR's proposal for the **Central Appalachian Habitat Stewardship Program**; NFWF is required to go through a Congressional and NFWF board certification notification process before any projects and announcements can be made official; Notifications should be made by mid-November 2017
- Provided *Emily Krafjack*, Mehoopany Creek Watershed Association (MCWA) with EPCAMR's and ARIPPA's logo for her to use in a newsletter article on the **ARIPPA/EPCAMR Mini-Grant** Award for the limestone sand dosing of Red Brook Run and Coal Bed Swamp

Project Coordination

- Received some driller contact information from *Brad Domitrovitsch*- AES, LLC for when we are ready to determine the drilling locations with the **Mocanaqua AMD Tunnel Mine Pool Basin Project** with SRBC; Forwarded the information to *Mike Hewitt*-EPCAMR Program Manager; Forwarded an image to *Brad* from *Rachael* that was created in EarthVision 3D that shows the progress on the mine pool mapping and modeling of the lower Wyoming Valley and the Mocanaqua AMD Tunnel mine pool basin with an orientation, description of the vein layers, the digital elevation model, and explanation of the image
- Attended a Meeting at the Pottsville District Mining Office with PA DEP BAMR Staff, District Mining Office Staff, Olympus Power, Northampton Generating, and EPCAMR Staff to further develop the **Harry E. Bank Reclamation Project Proposal** in Swoyersville, PA for consideration of PA AML Pilot funds; Received comments from Eric Cavazza-PA DEP BAMR following the Pottsville DMO Meeting; Scheduled a follow-up meeting at the PA DEP BAMR Office in Wilkes-Barre on October 23rd to better understand the procedural and remaining application process; Created a Google Document draft of the grant proposal and forwarded it around to partners and EPCAMR Staff who will be assisting with editing

and preparing the documentation; Provided partners shared input and concerns from one local resident, *Mark Jaskolka*, who brought up good points about maintaining the integrity of the existing neighborhoods during the eventual reclamation of the site; Followed up with *Chris Belleman*, Executive Director of the Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority who informed EPCAMR that there no need for any kind of approvals through the Authority for our effort to proceed; Contacted *Andy Reilly*, Executive Director for the Luzerne County Redevelopment Authority for a letter of support and to determine ownership of some of the abandoned railroads in the vicinity of the project area; Contacted *Neal Fowler*-ARC to see if there was any other funding sources that we could leverage for the project (https://www.arc.gov/appalachian_region/Pennsylvania.asp), even though Luzerne County is listed as a Transitional County; Sought letters of support from the various youth sports groups in the Swoyersville area and provided them with a template to write their letters back to EPCAMR in support of the project; Received a letter from Pagnotti Enterprises, Inc. conveying their present intention regarding the possible lease and dedication of around 4 acres of the Harry E. property to Swoyersville Borough for Community Public Use from *David Swisher*, COO

- Informed *Jeff Boyer*-River Logic Solutions that EPCAMR received their **\$50,000** ACH payment reimbursement for a major portion of the construction project on the ***Solomon Creek Dam Removal and Trout Stream Habitat Improvement Project*** and put the check in the mail; *Ben Lorson*-PA Fish & Boat Commission met with PA DOT & Skelly & Loy representatives at the Solomon Creek site on October 10th to discuss repairs to the site; PA F & BC explained that we all were going to try and come up with a fix that will be at no additional cost to PA DOT; *Tyler Neimond*,-PA F & BC Stream Habitat Section Chief will be met with *Jeff Boyer* and *Mike Lower*-Skelly & Loy on October 25th to come up with the most appropriate fix; The main options are whether to rebuild the cross vane structures, go with a more naturalized roughened channel or some type of hybrid between the two; PA DOT will have to discuss the revised plans with the regulatory entities that their roadway permitting is tied to
- *Ann Devine*, PA DEP EE Program Coordinator forwarded EPCAMR all of the grant paperwork and administrative paperwork to complete our ***Solomon-Plains Plainsville AMD EE STEM Program***; Forwarded the paperwork to *Gavin*, EPCAMR Watershed Outreach Specialist who will be overseeing the project; Directed *Gavin* to create a project folder with all of the fully executed grant paperwork for our records

Community Volunteer Coordination

- Professor *Amy Williams* from Towson University, MD has **9** students from her Geology Club coming to the ***Centralia Cleanup*** on October 21st to volunteer with EPCAMR; Wilkes University is sending down a van of students led by Student Leader *Kayla Wedlock*; Sent a flyer to *Jeff Dobias*, who was interested in attending and volunteering; Sent a donation letter to Save-A-Lot Store in Lancaster, PA to *Josh Heuyard*, Store Manager and member of Wicked Jeeps of Central PA who will be donating materials and supplies to the cleanup; Wegmans informed EPCAMR that they would provide us with a **\$50** gift card towards refreshments to feed the volunteers
- Completed a field survey of the illegal dumping along High Street, Dana Street, and PA Avenue in Wilkes-Barre, PA with *Mahmoud Mouhmin* and *Llywellyn Westrick*-King's College

- Sent the EPCAMR Staff who could attend the Centralia Cleanup a run-down of the day's activities and plan of attack on the various illegal dumping locations and our coordination role for the day; Picked up last minute items and loaded up the EPCAMR Work truck; Headed down on Saturday morning, October 21st and coordinated and completed the 4th Annual Cleanup Event; EPCAMR received coverage from the Philadelphia Inquirer; (<http://www.philly.com/philly/news/centralia-coal-fire-mine-trash-cleanup-20171026.html>); Details can be found on www.centraliapa.org and the EPCAMR Facebook Event Page; Provided Joe with a list of sponsors, donors, and volunteers, who attended the event; A video was created during the cleanup by *Joe Sapienza II*, Director of the Centralia: PA's Lost Town Documentary; (<https://vimeo.com/240243077>); Here are the stats:
 - **8.37** Tons or **16,470** Pounds of trash collected (2 40 cubic yard dumpsters were donated by Mostik Bros. this year-estimated to be worth **\$1000**); EPCAMR paid for the tipping fee that was \$539.86 through the Community Aid, Inc. grant
 - **53** Tires collected and removed
 - 1 Couch, 2 Recliners, 2 televisions (busted up); 12 rugs removed
 - **93** Total Volunteers for the day
 - **744** donated hours of volunteer service by the **93** volunteers ($\$23.89 \times 744 = \mathbf{\$17,774.16}$)
 - Original Italian Pizza-Mt. Carmel provided the pizza (donated 4 large pies)
 - Amy Saraka – Newport Township CrimeWatch Organization-(donated a tray of pasta salad)
 - Taquiera J. Zapata-provided the Mexican Food as a donation (soup, beans and rice, tacos, tortillas)-donated his food truck for the day
 - EPCAMR purchased refreshments and ice through the donations from several gift cards (Target, Wegmans, Price Chopper) and from donations that came through the online fundraiser through GiveGab
 - PA DOT, Keep PA Beautiful, Pennsylvania Environmental Council NE Office, American Rivers, National River Cleanup Week-all donated bags and gloves
 - Tommy Hynoski-(donated the use of the Centralia Borough Building, restrooms, and picnic tables in the Centralia Hose Company No. 1 bay)
 - EPCAMR provided the rakes and shovels
 - Towson University, Wilkes University, and King's College,
 - Dean Hooper-promoted the event through the Centralia Facebook Group
 - Mitchell Weed and his friend Jason Korth donated the use of his 6' & 8' trailer to pick up trash
 - Wicked Jeeps of Central PA and Wicked Jeeps Coal Region (donated vehicles, winches, water, soda, snacks, garbage bags, and hand sanitizer)
 - Joe Sapienza II provided garbage bags, leaf bags, contractor bags, water, bug spray, cleanup supplies), video promotion of cleanup (pre & post cleanup)
 - Centraliapa.org- publicity and outreach through their website
 - Mr. Charles Connell donated \$100 towards the 10 XL Pizza Pies from Original Italian Pizza
 - Patricia Chapman, former Centralia resident donated a grill for lunch and charcoal for the hot dogs
- *Alexander Criswell*, Wilkes University student, requested that EPCAMR help him locate the Solomon Creek AMD Boreholes for a class monitoring project with Dr. Whitman; EPCAMR Executive Director showed him the location and discussed his monitoring procedures and locations where to get water quality data above, below, and within the AMD Borehole itself
- *Conal Herron*, Nanticoke and *Eva Piatek*-Conservation Voters of PA, Philadelphia, PA signed up to become an EPCAMR Volunteer through our Mailchimp page; Followed up with a personal e-mail to the both of them

Conferences, Training, Tours, & Workshops

- Provided *Dr. Elizabeth Hughes*, EC with a copy of the Executive Director's resume to be included with the ***EWT Brownfields Training Program*** report to the US EPA Region III; Provided Dr. Hughes with contact information for *Jim McGinley* and *Michael Gilroy*, both with the Commission of Economic Opportunity (CEO) who work with displaced Veterans looking for work or workforce development; Helped to develop the agenda and curriculum layout and assessment for the Introductions to Brownfields Course that the Executive Director will be teaching along with *Dr. Hughes* in February of 2018; Attended the first Informational Session on the Program at CareerLink in Wilkes-Barre on October 18th
- *John Dawes*-Foundation for PA Watersheds contacted the Executive Director to commend EPCAMR for our presentation at the ***NAAML P Conference*** and for taking questions from the audience; Informed him that EPCAMR had followed up with *Claire Borzner* in Senator Casey's Office while at the Conference in regards to the RECLAIM Act; *Branden Diehl*-Foundation for PA Watersheds was also contacting Casey's Office through *Kim Bierly*; EPCAMR received a response from *Claire* and discussed it with *John* and *Branden*; Reviewed the Congressional Budget Office's Cost Estimate for HR 1371 (RECLAIM Act)
- Provided our PA AMR Conference Planning Committee a list of potential speakers from the recent National Association of State Land Reclamationist (NASLR) Conference in Williamsport, PA; These reclamation professionals deal with active mining; www.naslr.org
- Requested some information on the recently held ***Water, Water Everywhere Conference on the Upper Delaware River*** from *Madeline Urbish* with the Delaware River Watershed Coalition and *Jen Orr*-PA DEP; EPCAMR wasn't able to attend and was wondering if there were any leftover conference packets or links to presentations going to be made available
- *Cassandra Krul*, OSMRE AmeriCorps for the Pittsburg Office, requested a trip out to the Anthracite Region for an AMD/AML Tour
- Submitted a presentation to *Tali MacArthur*-PA Council of Trout Unlimited for the Keystone Coldwater Conference on Community Outreach on the Surface Mining Control Reclamation Act (SMCRA) Title IV Fee Authorization, State-Wide Partners involved in Abandoned Mine Reclamation, and the PA AML Campaign in February 2018
- Convened a monthly PA AMR Conference Call to begin to plan our 20th Anniversary Conference in State College, PA for 2018
- Attended the ***Association for Fundraising Professionals NEPA Non-Profit Institute Philanthropy Forum & Leadership Conference*** in downtown Wilkes-Barre at Wilkes University
- Attended a Mine Subsidence Insurance (MSI) Mosaic Training Session along with the EPCAMR Staff at the PA DEP California District Mining Office, California, PA

EPCAMR Program Administration

- Reconciled EPCAMR's Checking Accounts and PA Invest Accounts; Completed bi-weekly Payroll Reporting and submitted to OneSource; Paid Health Care Premiums for EPCAMR Staff; Balanced EPCAMR Checking Register; Checked with RJ Zagrapan to see if our FUTA 1st Quarter 2017 wasn't paid
- Reminded EPCAMR Staff to complete their Personnel Evaluations for 2017 and provide them to the Executive Director before October 7th, 2017
- Received a letter from OSMRE that stated that Professional Development funds are available up to **\$2000** for our two OSMRE/AmeriCorps Watershed Steward Volunteers, *Abbie Keefe* and *Rachael Grube* to utilize for their second year term; Provided *Abbie* and *Rachael* with a copy of the letter that was sent around to the sponsor site Supervisors
- Provided *Basil Lynch*, CPA for Kovalchik & Kollar, LLP with our 2016 Tax Information (W-2, W-3) for the completion of our Annual 990s, Payroll Reports, and EPCAMR Board Officer and volunteers information; Informed that our 2016 990s were completed and that they could be picked up in the next few weeks
- Completed a professional 360 Evaluation for *Winnie Black*, PSAYDN Project Accelerate Coordinator for the Center for Schools and Communities; PSAYDN is a project partner on the Green STEM Honda Grant
- EPCAMR received a congratulatory letter from *Tamara Seiler*-PA DEP on completing the PA DEP 319 Conservation District Mining East-#4100071813 Non-Point Source Management Grant; The PA DEP, having reviewed available materials and data pertaining to the grant, have determined, based upon the apparent reliability of those materials that all required work relating to the grant have been completed; The grant is effectively closed effective October 10, 2017
- Renewed EPCAMR's domain (www.epcamr.org) on GoDaddy for 2 years at a discounted rate of \$40.43
- EPCAMR received a new **Conservation District Mining-East 319 Non-Point Management Grant (Project #1722)** in the amount of **\$390,000** for **3 years** retroactive to **July 1, 2017 through June 30, 2020**; *Tamara Seiler*, PA DEP provided EPCAMR with all of the grant agreement paperwork and the signature page that will need to be signed by the EPCAMR President and Secretary before November 23rd, 2017; EPCAMR Executive Director noticed incorrect dates in the grant agreement, therefore, made *Tamara* and *Donna Wagner* aware of the changes that needed to be made and waited on receipt of the updated paperwork
- Informed *Tammy Monahan*, Payroll Specialist-OneSource that effective October 6th, *Kelsey Biondo's* payroll should be terminated and she would need to be removed or made inactive from the list; Contacted Highmark BlueCross/Blue Shield to do the same for her health care benefits for the end of the month of October 2017; EPCAMR will be getting a new Payroll Lead named *Carol Maraza* from OneSource
- Provided a former EPCAMR employee *Samantha Schafer*, a Letter of Recommendation for a substitute teaching position in Valdez, Alaska, where she now works as an outdoors kayaking guide
- Provided *Valerie Stewart*-Community Aid, Inc. with EPCAMR's W-9 and a link to the final video of our **4th Annual Centralia Cleanup**; <https://vimeo.com/240243077>
- Provided *Mike*-EPCAMR Program Manager with information from the Growing Greener Coalition on the wrap up of the PA State Budget; The Tax Code did not contain any negative environmental riders